Celebrate Success!

Above: Bailey Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences in Fairfax County, Virginia transformed an empty patch of land into a garden to be enjoyed by students and the community. Photo: Bailey Elementary

Captivate students and excite them about schoolyard learning by planting or improving a garden at your school or institution! Plan next year’s garden or plan on finishing an existing garden today. A garden encourages healthy, sustainable living practices and gives teachers the opportunity to break free from the confines of the classroom. Students gain life-long communication and organization skills by

Above: Garden planted by Project Sweetie Pie in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Photo: Project Sweetie Pie, 2014.

Project Sweetie Pie will be offering a Container Gardening Demonstration on September 19, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Demonstration is taking place in the North Point Parking Lot at 1315 Penn Ave N, Minneapolis, MN. Contact info found here.

Congratulations to NAMI’s Garden Grant Recipients! Please share with us how you create and transform your gardens!
being involved in building the garden. Furthermore, students are able to make observations, conduct experiments, and ask scientific questions in a field-based learning environment year round.

Apply for a Garden Grant by December 15th!


Attention all 2014 Summer NAMI participants! Do not forget to apply for a Garden Grant that gives your school or institution up to $1000 dollars to build a new garden or improve an existing garden on school grounds. Before filling out your garden grant application, do not forget to plan ahead using this Let’s Move Schoolyard Garden Checklist from the Let’s Move initiative and start the gardening!

Featured Story: Julie Weisenhorn

Please take a minute to read this fun and inspiring article about Minnesotan Julie Weisenhorn. She shares her passionate journey of becoming a Master Gardener and Horticulturist. Julie even outlines some of her expert gardening tips at the end of the article! You can also check out some of the work Master Gardeners, including Julie, are involved in here.
2014 Monarch Population Update


2013 was a monitoring season to remember for many MLMP volunteers, one which they hoped they would someday forget. With the number of volunteer reports of very few monarch eggs and caterpillars throughout much of the northern breeding range, it was no surprise to us to see the overwintering population in Mexico reach a record low last winter. While the 2013 season left people in hopeful anticipation that monarchs would find their milkweed at all, the 2014 season seems to be looking up for monarchs and volunteers!

Breeding started off slow in Texas, with MLMP volunteers reporting eggs at the end of March at a density of about 0.07 monarchs per milkweed plant. Data from previous years show the typical density for this time to be anywhere from about 0.1 to 1.0. Monarchs then continued on their journey by expanding into their northern breeding range, much of which experienced a cool, wet spring this year. Although seemingly off to a slow start, monarchs arrived on time and found suitable plants for their eggs.

In Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan monarchs first arrived in mid-late May, illustrated by the peak of eggs reported by

Create a Blooming Necklace!

Use this great craft activity to get kids excited about gardening. You will need cotton balls, yarn, a floral tube/lid, and flower or vegetable seeds.

1. Put 2 cotton balls in the tube.
2. Make a slight indentation in the cotton ball and put the desired seeds into the tube (large seeds work best).
3. Add water to the tube so the cotton is damp, but do not allow water to pool in the bottom.
4. Thread the string through the floral tube lid and attach the lid to the tube.

Above: Common Milkweed seed sprouting in a floral tube necklace. Photo: Dane Elmquist, 2014

Kids can then wear these necklaces and watch their own seeds sprout before they are planted in a garden! This idea, teacher resources, and many more garden activities, can be found online at Kids Gardening.

http://us2.campaign-archive1.com/?u=57d05e00ea4320226db4f129f&sid=f4015a4fd3[1/14/2015 2:27:50 PM]
MLMP volunteers at that time. MLMP data are showing a second peak of eggs and larvae for those states during mid-late July. The second spike, signifying the next generation of offspring, reached between 0.1 and 0.2 monarchs per milkweed plant (or, 1 to 2 monarchs for every 10 plants observed). This second peak was higher for each state than the initial peak of eggs seen when monarchs first arrived in the states, suggesting that conditions in their breeding habitats were favorable. Favorable conditions allowing higher egg-laying or survival rates could include abundant milkweed and nectar plants, adequate rainfall, warm temperatures, and lower predation and parasitism rates. During the same time frame in 2013 (mid-late July), monarchs were only reported at a density of about 2-4 monarchs per 100 plants observed. The 2014 season is shaping up to be a better year than last, and will likely result in an increase in the overwintering population. Let’s hope the conditions continue to favor monarchs in the Midwest.

Remember to keep reporting until your milkweed has died back for the season!

Article by: Wendy Caldwell (Monarch Joint Venture)

The University of Minnesota Monarch Lab is on Facebook! Please remember to 'Like' us and share with your friends and colleagues. Our page is updated with cool teacher resources, monarch related news/events, and updates on what is happening in the Monarch Lab!